CLAIMS

I claim:

- 1 1. A method for managing electronic communications:
- 2 recording a direction of a first electronic
- 3 communication between a first entity and a second entity;
- 4 determining a duration required for said second entity
- 5 to process said first electronic communication;
- 6 storing said electronic communication, said direction,
- 7 said duration, and identities of said first and said second
- 8 entities in a database with at least one other data record
- 9 of a second electronic communication;
- 10 establishing a standard duration from said first and
- 11 said second communications; and,
- 12 comparing subsequent electronic communications to said
- 13 standard duration,
- 14 whereby productivity of communicating entities may be
- 15 determined through electronic communications.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of
- 2 graphically presenting said first and said second
- 3 communications.
- 1 3. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:
- 2 receiving a plurality of user-defined standards; and

- 3 alerting a user when a communication violates one of
- 4 said plurality of standards.
- 1 4. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of
- 2 reading a message-specific standard duration from metadata
- 3 of a received electronic communication.
- 1 5. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:
- 2 determining a subject matter for each received
- 3 communication; and
- 4 storing said determined subject matter in said
- 5 database in the data record for that electronic
- 6 communication.
- 1 6. The method of claim 5 wherein the step of determining
- 2 the subject matter further comprises reading subject matter
- 3 data from said metadata.
- 1 7. The method of claim 5 wherein said first entity and
- 2 said second entity are users and further comprising the
- 3 steps of:
- 4 determining for each said user the time applied by
- 5 that user to a selected subject matter; and

- 6 providing each said user with a rank in response to
- 7 said time determining step.
- 1 8. The method of claim 7 further comprising the step of
- 2 associating said rank with business data.
- 1 9. The method of claim 1 wherein said electronic
- 2 communications further comprise telephone calls.
- 1 10. The method of claim 1 wherein said electronic
- 2 communications further comprise e-mails.

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- 1 11. The method of claim 10 wherein said electronic
- 2 communications further comprise video data.
- 1 12. The method of claim 1 wherein said electronic
- 2 communications further comprise transferred data files.
- 1 13. The method of claim 12 wherein said transferred data
- 2 files further comprise mixed media data.
- 1 14. The method of claim 1 wherein said electronic
- 2 communications further comprise instant messaging.



- 1 15. The method of claim 1 wherein said electronic
- 2 communications further comprise image files.
- 1 16. The method of claim 1 wherein said step of
- 2 establishing a standard duration further comprises
- 3 establishing said standard duration using the size and data
- 4 format of the electronic communication.
- 1 17. A system for managing electronic communications,
- 2 comprising:
- 3 means for recording a direction of a first electronic
- 4 communication between a first user and a second user;
- 5 means for determining a duration required for said
- 6 second entity to process said first electronic
- 7 communication;
- 8 a database for storing said electronic communication,
- 9 said direction, said duration, and identities of said first
- 10 and said second users, said database storing at least one
- 11 other data record of a second electronic communication;
- means for establishing a standard duration from said
- 13 first and said second communications; and,
- means for comparing subsequent electronic
- 15 communications to said standard duration,

- 16 whereby productivity of communicating entities may be
- 17 determined through electronic communications.
- 1 18. The system of claim 17 further comprising means for
- 2 graphically presenting said first and said second
- 3 communications.
- 1 19. The system of claim 17 further comprising:
- 2 means for receiving a plurality of user-defined
- 3 standards; and
- 4 means for alerting a user when a communication
- 5 violates one of said plurality of standards.
- 1 20. The system of claim 17 further comprising means for
- 2 reading a message-specific standard duration from metadata
- 3 of a received electronic communication.
- 1 21. The system of claim 17 further comprising:
- 2 means for determining a subject matter for each
- 3 received communication; and
- 4 means for storing said determined subject matter in
- 5 said database in the data record for that electronic
- 6 communication.

- 1 22. The system of claim 21 wherein the means for
- 2 determining the subject matter further comprises means for
- 3 reading subject matter data from said metadata.
- 1 23. The system of claim 22 further comprising:
- 2 means for determining for each said user the time
- 3 applied by that user to a selected subject matter; and
- 4 means for providing each said user with a rank in
- 5 response to said time determining step.
- 1 24. The system of claim 23 further comprising means for
- 2 associating said rank with business data.